

Soviet Arms Pact Gets the Support Of Senator Byrd Further Changes by Critics Defeated in Committee

By CHARLES MOHR

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 25 — The Senate majority leader, Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia, endorsed the strategic arms treaty with the Soviet Union today and said he had obtained a promise from President Carter that the United States would proceed with the MX mobile intercontinental missile.

At the same time, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee defeated what had been viewed as politically attractive but potentially fatal amendments to the treaty.

Senator Byrd and others conceded that its ultimate fate was still in doubt, but today's developments seemed to give impetus to efforts aimed at approval.

Javits Sees Pact 'in Strong Shape'

Senator Jacob K. Javits, Republican of New York, called the committee votes "highly desirable" steps and said "so far the treaty is emerging in strong shape."

But a Senate staff member associated with the opposition said supporters were considerably short of putting together the two-thirds majority needed for approval.

The Foreign Relations Committee met in closed session to vote on proposals that would have made it more difficult for the Soviet Union to cheat on the treaty terms. Officials of the Carter Administration warned that Moscow would probably not agree to these changes.

Missile Test Data at Issue

One of the proposals was an understanding, requiring Soviet assent, that would have barred any interference with the transmission of radio signals containing missile flight-test data. Experts say that such data, needed for treaty verification, could be denied by a number of methods, such as dropping tape recordings from missiles or reducing the power of the signals.

The understanding, offered by Senator John Glenn, Democrat of Ohio, was voted down by 9 to 6. The committee also defeated an amendment that would have allowed each party to collect data on the territory of the other party, and an understanding that would have required prior notification of all missile launchings.

At a news conference this afternoon, Senator Byrd not only announced support of the treaty, as expected, but also offered a detailed statement in its defense. He said President Carter had given a

written assurance that he intended to proceed with the controversial MX and with ground-launched and sea-launched cruise missiles when a treaty protocol that temporarily forbids their deployment expires Dec. 31, 1981. This assurance may swing some wavering Senate votes in favor of the treaty, but it may also alienate liberal Senators who oppose the MX.

Senator Byrd apparently felt that clarity on the MX was politically desirable. Many figures have expressed the opinion that it will never be built and will be bargained away in negotiations on a future arms treaty to replace the present pact when it expires.

The Foreign Relations Committee will require at least one more week to finish debating and voting on documents associated with the treaty. It will be mid-November before the text can be sent to the Senate. But, with its actions today, the majority in favor of the treaty has beaten back virtually all of the so-called killer amendments in committee.

These victories had been expected, perhaps by even larger margins, and will have to be refought on the floor of the Senate where the outcome is unpredictable.

Still to be voted on next week in the committee is a proposal by Senator Glenn that would more firmly assure that the Soviet Union will not increase the intercontinental capability of the TU-22M bomber, known as Backfire in the West. The proposal is expected to be defeated.

Senator Byrd, in his news conference in an ornate anteroom of the Senate wing of the Capitol, expressed the opinion that the Senate could finish other legislative business and take up the treaty just before or just after Thanksgiving.

In the past he said he would probably not call up the treaty if it seemed likely to be defeated. Today he said so many senators were keeping their intentions secret until the final roll-call that it might be impossible to get a count before the vote. For that reason, he said, he is now inclined to "go win or lose."

Senator Byrd read parts of a 5,000-word statement analyzing the main treaty provisions and the opposition arguments against them.

"What we do here and now will not be judged by polls or elections but in the cold, clear light of history," the statement concluded.

Senator Byrd said the treaty was in the national interest and should be approved with understandings and reservations already adopted by the Foreign Relations Committee that would not require renegotiation or risk rejection by the Soviet Union.

In dealing with most objections to the

treaty, Senator Byrd said that the consequences of rejection would increase possible hazards to United States security by erasing any limitations on the Soviet Union's freedom of action.

Senator Frank Church of Idaho, the chairman, publicly announced the results of the votes taken today by the Foreign Relations Committee in closed session. He said the treaty amendment, by Senator Richard G. Lugar, Republican of Indiana, permitting intelligence collection on the soil of each country had been defeated by a vote of 9 to 6. Senator Glenn's understanding requiring prior notification of missile launchings was beaten by the same margin.

The committee approved by unanimous votes much more innocuous versions of these proposals, exhorting the United States to regard interference with flight-test signals as a cause for complaint and to seek a launching-notification clause in a future treaty. Senator Lugar called these understandings, which need not even be communicated to the Soviet Union, toothless.